portion of the money invested in the Government of India Paper. Such a Bank would be both useful to the public and profitable to the Government.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

160. The duty of the Government towards the development of the resources of the country.

Mr. K. C. Mammen Mappilla (Member, Kottayam taluk) said that he intended to speak about the economic development of the country and the kind and degree of assistance which it was the duty of the Government to render for the same. In the words of an authority on the question, "it is economic rivalry and the desire to add to the economic wealth of the country that has established and controlled the world policy during the last century". The duty of Government to help in the economic development of a country was now universally recognised. He referred to the various measures adopted by the Governments in the European countries, in India and in the Native States of Mysore and Baroda for developing their economic, industrial and agricultural resources. At least the force of example should, he said, prompt the Government to turn their attention to the serious problem. But before taking definite action in any particular direction, it was desirable to appoint a commission, composed of officials and non-officials, for making a careful enquiry into the various resources of the country and the ways in which they could be developed. A commission, if appointed, would be able to study the question in all its aspects, gather a mass of evidence and facts and present them in a connected and practical form. The findings of the commission would be of considerable help to the Government in shaping their policy and determining the lines and directions in which action should be profitably taken.

The Member was not oblivious of the fact that the resources of the Government were limited and that the demands on their finances were numerous. He thought that the best course under present circumstances would be first to appoint a commission to make a careful enquiry and find out any new sources of income which could be tapped by the Government. At present it was only the poor land-holding ryots that contributed anything to the State exchequer, while the rest of the people, who also enjoyed equal protection and privileges under the Government and made a lot of money, were completely immune from any taxation. He thought that the inequality could be removed, with profit alike to the State and satisfaction to the tax-paying public.

He next proceeded to touch upon some of the subjects to which he would invite the special attention of the Government :—

(1) Some of the laws and Regulations of the country as also various parts of the administrative machinery, were out of date and stood in the way of progress. As instances, he mentioned the Settlement and the Revenue departments. Owing to the peculiarities of the settlement rules and laws, there was a feeling of apprehension in the minds of the people that, when the next settlement came, they would be hard-hit. The one serious objection to the settlement proceedings was that it made the people who improved their lands pay more tax, while those who sat idle and did nothing to their property were left alone. It was necessary to see whether there was anything in the laws or Regulations which hindered the economic or ordered development of the people. In regard to the Revenue Department, it had often-times appeared to thoughtful people that, in that department, with which the people were most intimately connected, the way in which matters were dealt with from the lowest to the highest led to a lot of confusion, delay and loss. It was strange that the most important department, which was so closely bound up with the everyday life of the people, should continue to be under the direct charge of the Head of the Administration, whose valuable time should be devoted to questions of general policy and not frittered away in the details and routine of revenue administration. It also in a serious way retarded the economic freedom and development of the people. He suggested the desirability of appointing a Revenue Commissioner, with Deputy Peishkars under him, to co-ordinate the work of the Revenue Department and set free much of the Dewan's time for better and more important things.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

(2) One of the difficulties in the way of economic development was the lack of capital with the people, even if they had ideas about useful enterprises. In many cases, the people lagged behind on account of the element of risk involved in such enterprises, and it was only the wealthy among them that could afford to try the experiment. In the opinion of the Member, the absence of many such well-to-do and enterprising men in the State was, to some extent, directly traceable to the action of the Government. He referred to the way in which departmental contracts, such as the printing of readers and other Malayalam text-books, the printing of the settlement registers, the supply of medicines, stores &c., to departments, and the P. W. contracts, were given to foreigners and foreign companies, to the severe exclusion of the subjects of the State. The reason for the exclusion was not due either to the unwillingness or incapability of the latter to perform the contracts satisfactorily. The free grant of such contracts to the people would go a great way in enabling them to obtain a capital for new enterprises.

(3) Another way of removing the impediment furnished by lack of capital would be the establishment of a State Bank on strictly business lines, under the management of a European Banker of experience. If the surplus money lying idle in the State treasury in Government paper could be made use of for starting a bank, the accumulated savings of merchants, traders, officers and other people would also naturally find their way into the bank, when it had the guarantee of the Government behind it. Such a bank would be of great help to the people in their commercial, manufacturing and other enterprises. It would also serve as a central bank for the co-operative societies that would soon have to spring up in the State, and supply the capital for them. The experience in British India and other countries had now proved beyond doubt that the success of co-operative movements depended upon the existence of such central banks. Another way in which the State Bank could be of assistance was by its being made to serve the purpose of an agricultural bank. In the conditions of the country, a pure State Bank, like the Bank of Madras, was not what was required. It should, on the other hand, be on the model of the Agricultural Bank of Egypt started by Lord Cromer. Besides the ordinary functions of a bank, the State Bank should help the co-operative societies movement and also assist the ryots in introducing modern scientific improvements in their cultivation.

(4) The Agricultural Loans Regulation, though it was recently amended in some important respects, still remained a dead letter. Though the fact could not be denied that the people were handicapped at every step for want of capital, it was well worth an enquiry why the professedly generous provisions of the law were not freely availed of by the needy people. The reason was that a person who could raise a lac of rupees in the outside market because of his standing in the money market, could manage to get only ten thousand rupees under the stringent provisions of the Regulation, and such a person stood in need of no assistance. He therefore urged that the provisions of the Regulation should be relaxed considerably. Further, as advised by Mr. Chatterton in Mysore, it was necessary that a Revenue Assistant should be attached to the Director of Agriculture, and his sole duty should be to deal with the applications for loans and see that they were promptly sanctioned and the loans granted before the necessity for them had ceased.

(5) In other countries, the Government were subsidising various industries by advancing the required capital or by granting loans on favorable terms and with easy conditions of repayment. Similar action should be taken by the Government in the State.

(6) There were several thousands of acres of *puncha* lands cultivable only in alternate years and *cherikal* lands on which cultivation could be carried on only once in six years. The Government should conduct experiments through the Agricultural Department and see whether such lands could not be successfully cultivated annually by the application of special manures, &c. If only the experiments should result in success, it would be a sure way of increasing the material resources and wealth of the country several fold. Similar experiments should also be tried by the Director of Agriculture to test the suitability of the extensive areas of swamps lying

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

within the reserved forests for paddy cultivation, and if they should prove successful, such areas should be disafforested in convenient blocks and assigned to the people, thus adding to the paddy-producing area of the country.

(7) Large quantities of raw materials were being annually exported from the State. Attempts should be made to see whether many of them could not be converted into finished products in the country, which would fetch much higher value. The country was rich in such materials, but the people had neither the capital nor the enterprise to undertake the experiments by themselves. Government aid and demonstration were therefore required. He suggested that the Government should either subsidise enterprising people who came forward to try the experiments or have the experiments conducted through the Agricultural Department or through a special department created for the purpose, and the results demonstrated to the people. He mentioned the preservation of fruits, such as banana, and mangoes, and the extraction of pulp out of tapioca, as a few of the things in which the activities of the department might be usefully directed. It was also necessary to popularise up-to-date implements and new machinery such as oil engines, power-mills and the like.

(8) Agriculture was the main industry of the people. It was therefore the duty of the Government to remove all obstacles that stood in the way of agriculturel There were several channels and rivers which were blocked up by recent *puduval* registries. Similar registries also cut off paddy fields from one another and rendered access difficult from one block to another. Several channels were also silted up. He suggested that a competent Agricultural Engineer, preferably one with some knowledge of the country, should be appointed to study the conditions in the different places, conduct a survey of the country with special reference to the facilities required for irrigation and communication, and submit a definite report as to the works which should be carried out by the Government and those which the people should be compelled to do. Steady and sustained action should be pursued on the lines of the officer's report.

(9) Another subject that had a great influence in impeding the development of the country was the want of roads. Everywhere there was a great pressure for roads and if the Government were to carry out even a fraction of those demanded, the resources of the Government would be found to be insufficient for the purpose. At present roads were given to those places from which the greatest pressure came, and there was no end of the complaints from the different parts of the country for roads. To obviate the difficulty, he suggested the constitution of an Engineering Board, on the lines of the Road Board in England. The Board should take stock of the roads given to each taluk and the cost of the maintenance incurred on them, and the grant of new roads must be regulated according to the rateable value of each taluk. It was immaterial what standard was fixed—area, population or both combined, or better still the rateable value—but a principle should be fixed and the same uniformly adhered to and carried out in practice. Roads benefiting the whole country, such as the Main Central road, should be given the first place and treated as State roads, and the entire cost in respect of them should be borne by the Government. The remaining roads should be brought under 2 or 3 classes according to the extent and number of people served by them and in their case, a certain proportion of the cost of construction to be fixed might be recovered from the people. A similar course might be adopted in the case of the maintenance of existing roads. Certain roads, which were restricted in their benefit, should be asked to be maintained wholly by the people. It would also be a good idea to levy a road cess. It should be the duty of the Engineering Board to make the necessary investigation and suggest the classifications, and their recommendations should be steadily acted up to. That would have the effect of putting an end to the pressure brought to bear on the Government and there would also be no room for grumbling or heart-burn on the part of the people.

The Member concluded by saying that the people were absorbed in very small things and the main things of life were neglected. If there were more important things in a material sense, those things ought to engage the attention of the people

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

and so long as that was not done, there would be always petty jealousy and clamouring for the loaves and fishes of office. So long as the people were not taught to find out their own salvation in those larger affairs of life, their attention would be confined to narrow things and their outlook would be always circumscribed. But if only the powerful influence of the Government were exercised in such a manner that the people could work out their own economic salvation, there would be greater harmony and union among the various classes of the people and the resources of the country also would be increased several fold.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

161. The necessity for the extension of the Railway to South Travancore.

Mr. R. Ponnia Nadar (Member, Nominated) said that the existing motor service from Trivandrum to Nagercoil was quite unsuited to trade and to the ordinary people for purposes of travel. In the interests of trade and industry, the country should be opened up by railways. The development of trade at the Cape and Colachel would receive an impetus by the introduction of the iron horse in South Travancore. The manufacture of salt would be developed by improved facilities of communication. The Member therefore requested that the railway should be extended from Trivandrum to Cape Comorin.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

The consideration of the subjects being over, some of the Members of the Assembly addressed the Dewan as follows:—

Mr. K. A. Krishna Aiyangar, B. A. & B. L., (Member, T. I. C., Alleppey) :—

Sir,

On behalf of the Members of the Eleventh Session of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly, I beg of you to convey to His Highness the Maha Raja our deep feelings of devotion and loyalty to the Person and Throne of our Sovereign.

It is the homage of a grateful people that we tender in the name of our electorates, conscious of the rich harvest of blessings reaped by us during the thirty years of His Highness' beneficent reign, with the prospect of a still richer harvest that lies before us in the years to come, and it is therefore no wonder that, day after day, from the mansions of the rich and the cottages of the poor, devout prayers are ascending to the Footstool of the Almighty for His Highness' long life and health.

We feel it our duty to warmly acknowledge the uniform courtesy and patience with which you listened to our representations. We are conscious of several defects in us in the discharge of our duties as Members of this Assembly. I would request you, however, Sir, to remember that this infant institution is just entering upon the eleventh year of its existence, struggling through immaturity of understanding to the wisdom, the strength and the responsibility that manhood brings. I can see the vision of a better day, when public life in Travancore will be fuller and richer, broad-based upon a spirit of healthy compromise, and when the proudest distinction that we shall yearn for will be the privilege of being able to say, as the ancient Romans did, "I am a Travancore citizen." That happy day can be ushered in much earlier than many of us are at present inclined to believe, if the responsible leaders of the different communities in the State will educate public opinion and develop an ideal of public life under which all stand for the State and none for a party, and I plead with all the fervour and sincerity that I can command that they should work for this desirable consummation in a spirit of whole-hearted devotion. We hope, however, as years roll on, to be able to present a larger volume of sober constructive criticism on the great problems that engage or should engage the attention of His Highness' Government. But it is due to us to assure you that the idea of embarrassing Government was farthest from our thoughts in the representations that we made.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly